

AO 91 (Rev. 11/11) Criminal Complaint

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FILED

October 06, 2023

CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXASfor the
Western District of TexasUnited States of America
v.BY: CAV
DEPUTYCase No. **1:23-MJ-679-DH**Juan Jose Cardenas-Flores*Defendant(s)***CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

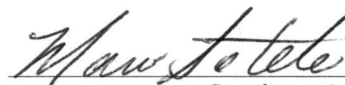
On or about the date(s) of October 5, 2023 in the county of Travis in the
Western District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:*Code Section**Offense Description*

Title 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1)

Possession with intent to manufacture, distribute, or dispense a
controlled substance

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

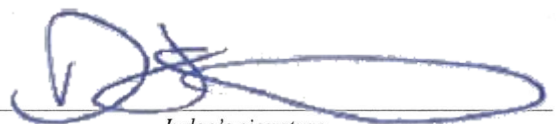
See Attached Affidavit

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.*Complainant's signature*

Mario Sotelo, DEA TFO

Printed name and title

- ☐ Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.
☒ Sworn to telephonically and signed electronically.

Date: 10/06/2023City and state: Austin, Texas*Judge's signature*

, US Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

Affidavit

I, Mario Sotelo, being duly sworn, depose and state the following:

INTRODUCTION

1. I am a Task Force Officer of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). As such, I am an “investigative or law enforcement officer” of the United States within the meaning of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2510(7), that is, an officer of the United States who is empowered by law to conduct investigations of and to make arrests for offenses enumerated in Title 18, United States Code, Section 2516(1).
2. I have been employed as a Task Force Officer for approximately five years, and a Police Officer for approximately twenty-seven years. I have received extensive training pertaining to narcotic investigations and the investigations of various crimes which arise from drug trafficking activities.
3. I have received specialized training on the subject of narcotics trafficking and money laundering from the DEA and have been personally involved in investigations concerning the possession, manufacture, distribution, and importation of controlled substances, as well as methods used to finance drug transactions.
4. I have participated in and conducted investigations of violations of various State and Federal criminal laws, including unlawful possession with intent to distribute controlled substances, distribution of controlled substances, use of a communication facility to commit narcotic offenses, importation of controlled substances, conspiracy to import, possess and distribute controlled substances, and money laundering, all in violation of Title 21 and Title 18, United States Code. These investigations resulted in arrests of individuals who have imported,

smuggled, received and distributed controlled substances, including cocaine, marijuana, heroin, methamphetamine and pharmaceutical controlled substances and the arrest of individuals who have laundered proceeds emanating from those illegal activities. Also, these investigations resulted in seizures of illegal drugs / controlled substances and proceeds from the distribution of those illegal drugs / controlled substances.

5. I have directed confidential informants and cooperating witnesses to successfully infiltrate various-sized narcotic enterprises via intelligence gathering, participation in consensual recordings and monitored purchases of controlled substances. I have executed search warrants for controlled substances and I have conducted surveillance in connection with numerous narcotic investigations.

6. I am familiar with the operations of illegal international drug trafficking organizations in various parts of the world, including the Central America, Mexico, India, Texas, and throughout the world.

7. I am familiar with the ways in which narcotic traffickers conduct their business, including methods of importing and distributing narcotics, money laundering, the use of cellular telephones and the internet to facilitate their illegal acts, and the use of numerical codes and code words to conduct drug transactions. My training and experience as a Task Force Officer of the DEA, my conversations with other Special Agents/Task Force Officers of the DEA, and state and local investigators familiar with narcotics trafficking and money laundering matters, form the basis of the opinions and conclusions set forth below, which I drew from the facts set forth herein.

RELEVANT FACTS

8. Affiant submits the following “specific and articulable facts” showing that there is probable cause to believe that Juan Jose CARDENAS-Flores is engaged in a conspiracy to distribute controlled substances, and has distributed controlled substances to wit- methamphetamine as set forth below.

9. In October 2023, CARDENAS-Flores was identified by a Travis County Confidential Source as a bulk distributor of Cocaine and Methamphetamine. This CS has been proven truthful and reliable and has provided information to law enforcement that has led to the seizures of Methamphetamine and other criminal acts. Shortly after agents identified CARDENAS-Flores, agents discovered he possessed an outstanding warrant out of Austin PD – Travis County, Texas for Aggravated Robbery, warrant number # D1DC2330291. On October 3, 2023, a Buy/Walk Operation was conducted utilizing the CS at a predetermined location in Austin, Texas. The CS at the instruction of agents arranged for the purchase of methamphetamine from CARDENAS-Flores in order to confirm the location of CARDENAS-Flores. The CS communicated with CARDENAS-Flores who confirmed the purchase of the methamphetamine scheduled to take place at 2504 Huntwick Drive, Austin, Texas 78741. Agents provided an undisclosed amount of USD of Travis County Imprest Funds for the agreed upon amount of methamphetamine and was also provided with an audio/video recording device. Once prepped by controlling agents, the CS departed the meet location for 2504 Huntwick Dr., Austin, Texas 78741. Agents and TCSO kept constant surveillance of the CS as he/she drove to 2504 Huntwick Dr., Austin, Texas 78741. After the CS arrived, he met with CARDENAS-Flores in the parking lot where the transaction was conducted and CARDENAS-Flores provided the CS with the agreed upon amount of methamphetamine for the agreed upon price. Once the transaction was complete, the CS departed the scene, followed off

by TCSO investigators to a predetermined location where the methamphetamine was turned over to agents.

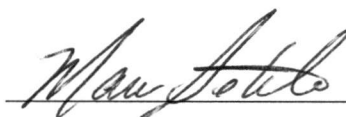
10. On October 5, 2023, The Travis County Sheriff's Office and the Austin Police Department ran a joint operation to affect the arrest of CARDENAS-Flores for the outstanding Aggravated Robbery, warrant number # D1DC23302913. Investigators established surveillance on CARDENAS-Flores at 2504 Huntwick Dr., Austin, Texas 78741 in order to take him into custody for outstanding warrant. The surveillance team observed CARDENAS-Flores leave his residence 2504 Huntwick Dr., Austin, Texas 78741 traveling in a white Honda Insight bearing Tx temporary buyers tag # 006668A27 and drive to a trailer which is parked at a storage facility located at 7109 Bain Rd, Del Valle, Texas 78617. Through surveillance and information gathered from the investigation, agents have identified this location as a possible "stash" location where CARDENAS-Flores stores controlled substances. At approximately 1:04 p.m., CARDENAS-Flores departed the "stash" location and was traveling South bound on Bain Rd, when the arrest team moved in and affected his arrest. At that time, a second vehicle, a silver Ford F150 bearing TX Lp # SLK3500, was observed following directly behind the Honda CARDENAS-Flores was driving. The occupants, later identified as: Patrick Anthony RODRIGUEZ-Costillo (driver) and Abigail MARTINEZ-Garanzuay (front-passenger) were observed immediately maneuvering in order to turn around and head back to the trailer in what agents believed was an attempt to elude them. Agents then followed this vehicle and observed that as RODRIGUEZ-Costillo and MARTINEZ-Garanzuay returned to their trailer/residence, they parked their truck and quickly entered the trailer. Agents believed RODRIGUEZ-Costillo and MARTINEZ-Garanzuay may attempt to conceal or destroy unknown items while inside the trailer.

11. At about that time, your Affiant approached the trailer along with Travis County Vice Unit Investigator Jason Vizcarra and initially spoke to RODRIGUEZ-Costillo who was detained, he denied having any knowledge of any illegal activity taking place. He stated he was playing video games all afternoon and was unaware. I then spoke to MARTINEZ-Garanzuay who was also detained and stated she is CARDENAS-Flores' daughter and the trailer is her residence and occupied only by her and RODRIGUEZ-Costillo. Your affiant made her aware that agents observed them drive back from the stop location and appeared to have hidden items on their own property. MARTINEZ-Garanzuay was very forthcoming and explained that her father, CARDENAS-Flores has been using her residence as a "stash" location for approximately a month. She stated that CARDENAS-Flores has had shipments of narcotics delivered to her residence by various unidentified men and she immediately places the bag in a large safe inside of her trailer. Once there, either CARDENAS-Flores or one of his "workers" randomly arrive at the trailer to pick up the narcotics from the safe and they leave to sell them. MARTINEZ-Garanzuay added that on today's event, CARDENAS-Flores arrived at the residence and placed approximately ten separately balled up packages of narcotics in a clothing basket which was later placed in F150. MARTINEZ-Garanzuay and RODRIGUEZ-Costillo followed CARDENAS-Flores as he told them to do.

12. MARTINEZ-Garanzuay then gave your affiant verbal consent which was witnessed by Investigator Vizcarra, and documented by police body cam video, to search her residence and vehicles for the "ball" packages described by MARTINEZ-Garanzuay. At that time, your affiant walked MARTINEZ-Garanzuay took agents over to the F150, and she showed your affiant the clothing basket filled with kilo and half kilo wrapped narcotics in the back seat of the truck. MARTINEZ-Garanzuay then walked with your affiant inside of the trailer and showed where there

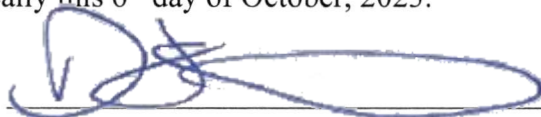
were approximately five more half kilo sized wrapped packages inside of a trash bag inside of the kitchen trash can. The total amount of methamphetamine seized was identified as approximately 14.6 Kilograms. All narcotics were seized tested and processed at the Travis County Sheriff's Office. The substance tested positive for methamphetamine and fentanyl utilizing a preliminary field test.

Signed in this 6th day of October, 2023.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mario Sotelo", written over a horizontal line.

Mario Sotelo, Task Force Officer
Drug Enforcement Administration

Subscribed and sworn to before me electronically this 6th day of October, 2023.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized "D" followed by a horizontal line, written over a horizontal line.

United States Magistrate Judge